United Nations A/70/164/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
16 September 2015

Original: English

Seventieth session
Item 98 (g) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament

Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum**

* A/70/150.

** The information contained in the present addendum was received after the issuance of the main report.

15-15702 (E) 300915

Please recycle

III. Reply received from the European Union

[Original: English]
[11 September 2015]

Arms control has great importance for the European Union, as Europe's experience demonstrates that security can be increased through confidence-building and arms control regimes. Because many recent conflicts do arise at the regional or subregional level, the European Union and its member States agree on the importance of regional organizations and of acting at the regional and subregional levels to stabilize the situations.

The European Union and its member States have, for many years, made important efforts in the direction of conventional arms control, focusing, for example, on combating the illegal spread of small arms and light weapons. Through a European Union strategy adopted in 2005 to combat the illicit accumulation of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, the European Union has promoted international cooperation at all levels.

At the United Nations level, the European Union has supported the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the successful negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty, which entered into force in 2014. This is also why the member States of the European Union supported the addition of small arms and light weapons as a new stand-alone category for the Register of Conventional Arms, and support the effective implementation of the reporting system in the framework of the Treaty.

The European Union has also promoted cooperation with regional organizations, in particular those in Africa, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community and the Economic Community of Central African States, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the Central American Integration System and the Caribbean Community. The plan of action stemming from the 2005 strategy of the European Union foresaw financial and technical support for regional or national organizations active in the fight against the spread of small arms and light weapons to: (a) support and implement United Nations initiatives, including the Programme of Action and the Arms Trade Treaty; (b) develop and reinforce their national or regional operational and institutional capabilities; and (c) take innovative action, such as the establishment of a dialogue among Africa, China and the European Union on the control of small arms. This has led the European Union to take concrete action not only in sub-Saharan Africa (support for ECOWAS on small arms and light weapons and the Programme of Action) and Central America (support for the Central American Integration System on small arms and light weapons), but also in Central and South-East Europe (support for the South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons on small arms and light weapons), North Africa and South-East Asia.

The European Union and its member States also strongly support the establishment of confidence-building and security-building measures as an important tool to overcome mistrust, enhance transparency and maintain peace and security at the regional and subregional levels. Because they increase transparency, confidence-building measures are an important factor in preventing conflicts and

enhance overall political stability and the security environment, especially in situations of armed conflict.

European States have benefited greatly from the transparency and confidence-building measures that were introduced in Europe, in particular through the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We reiterate our long-standing position in favour of the full implementation and modernization of such measures.